

Sex and STDs in Peru: a nation-wide general population-based survey of urban young adults.

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Objectives: Identify sex behaviors associated with increased risk for STD/HIV in young adults in Peru.

Methods: Consenting 18-29 years old adults from randomly selected households completed a demographic and a sex behavior questionnaire, and provided blood and urine or self applied vaginal swabs (SAVS) for STD diagnosis.

Results: The study was carried out between August and November of 2002. Of 15,259 participants completing the questionnaires 75% provided blood. Of 7,485 men in the sample 87% provides urine. Of 7,774 women, 84.0% provides SAVS. Overall HIV prevalence was 0.2% (0.4% for men and 0.1% for women); RPR reactivity was 1.1% for men and women; CT prevalence in women was 7.25% and 4.2% in men; GC prevalence in women was 0.8% and 0.27% in men; and trichomoniasis was detected in 5.5% of women. Low family income was associated with RPR reactivity ($p=0.006$), CT and GC in women ($p=0.004$ and $p=0.006$) and trichomoniasis ($p<0.001$). Lower level of education was associated with RPR reactivity ($p<0.001$), CT in men ($p=0.001$), CT and GC in women ($p<0.001$, $p=0.04$) and trichomoniasis ($p<0.001$). A high number of lifetime partners was associated with RPR reactivity, HIV, CT in men and women, GC in women ($p<0.001$ for each one) and Trichomoniasis ($p=0.004$). For 31% of men the last partner was considered casual, compared with 6% for women. Recognizing at least one of the last three partners as casual was associated with HIV infection ($p<0.001$) and CT in men ($p=0.02$). 915 men (12%) reported ever having sex with other men and 3265 (44%) reported sex with female sex workers. Having sex with an other men in the last year was associated with syphilis reactivity, HIV, GC and CT infections in men ($p<0.001$, $p<0.001$, $p=0.03$ and $p=0.03$ and $p=0.001$ respectively). Reported unprotected sex with FSW in last 12 months was associated with HIV infection, CT and GC in men ($p=0.01$, $p=0.05$, $p=0.02$).

Conclusions: Risky behaviors identified in this study suggest potential areas for intervention.